

# **Exploring the role that social media strategy has in promoting and creating awareness for a brand.**

Undergraduate Research Thesis

*Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with research distinction in Visual Communication Design in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University.*

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The Ohio State University  
April 2021**

*Project Advisor: Paul Nini, Department of Design*

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## 2020

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To create an online platform that helps readers efficiently find the books they like faster.

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To develop a social media strategy for promoting and creating awareness for the Leaf app and brand.

Research Distinction Statement

Overview

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Execution: Facebook, Instagram, Ads

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# 2020

## Senior Design Thesis

To create an online platform that helps readers efficiently find the books they like faster.

Thesis Statement  
Research  
Problem Space  
Deliverables  
Brand, App, Promo Items, Video



# Thesis Statement

Helping readers enjoy discovering books as much as they enjoy discovering the content within them.

Q

Search

0 Filters





# Problem Space

There is an overall lack of trust and lack of information within the digital book searching experience.



## Digital Search

Isolated

Missing Information

Lack of Trust



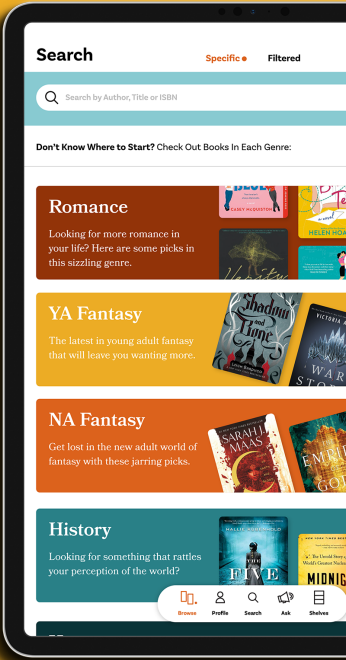
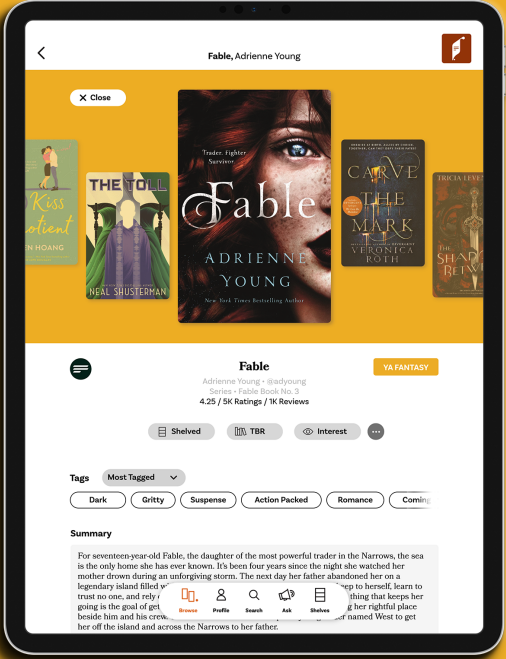
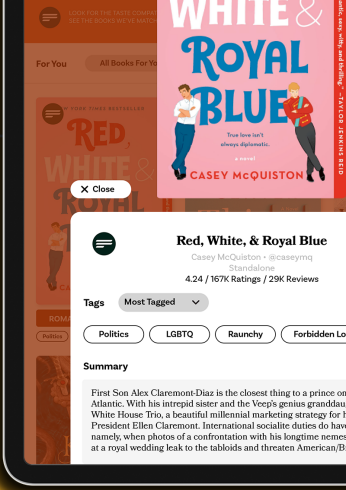
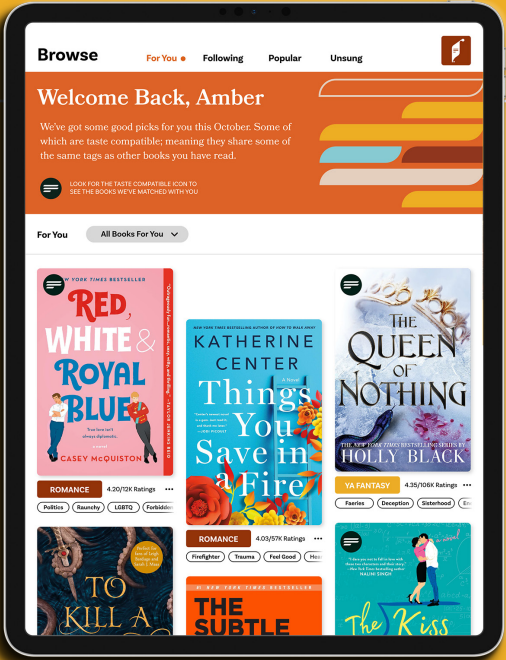
## Physical Search

Human Connection

Trust

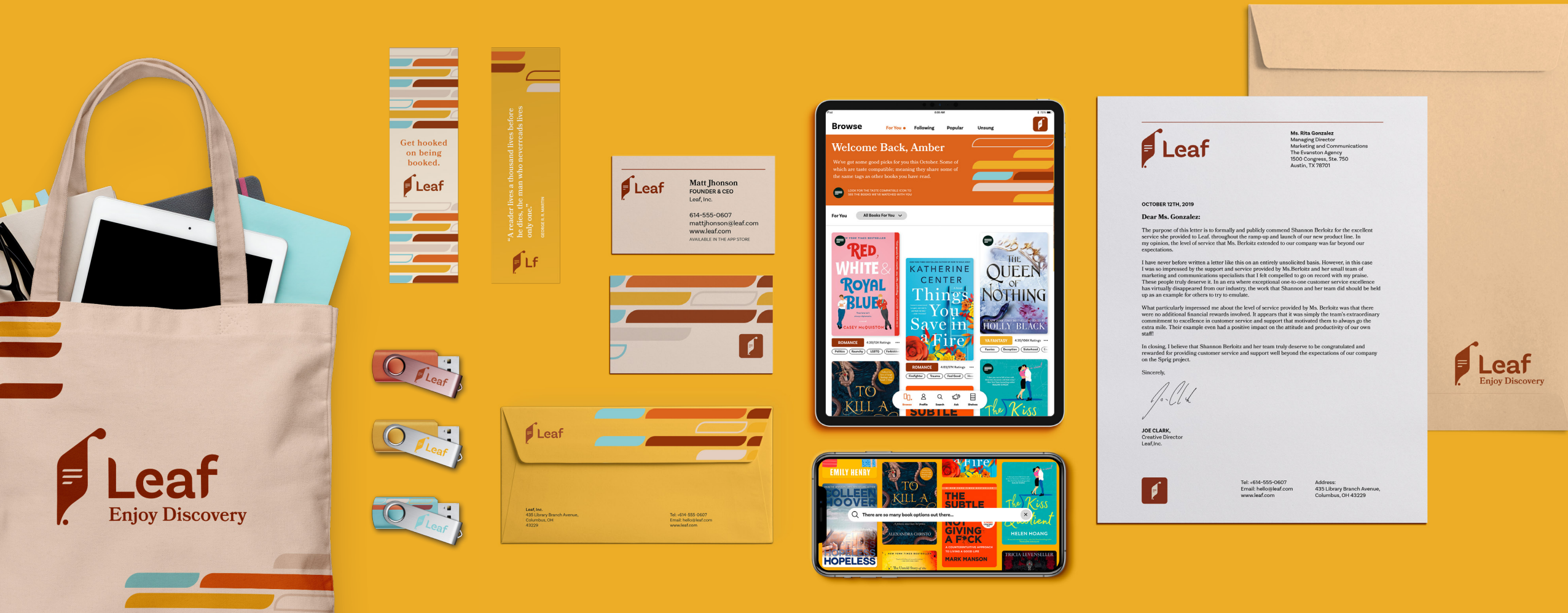


An app that helps readers enjoy discovering books online, with a searching experience that is personable, customizable, informative, and fun.



# Deliverables

A Brand, An App, Promo Items, and a Promo Video.



# Logotype

## Signature Breakdown



Leaf:

**noun** / a single thickness of paper, especially in a book.

**verb** / turn over (the pages of a book or the papers in a pile), reading them quickly or casually.

## Branding Options



**Brand signature** / (logotype + brandmark + tagline)

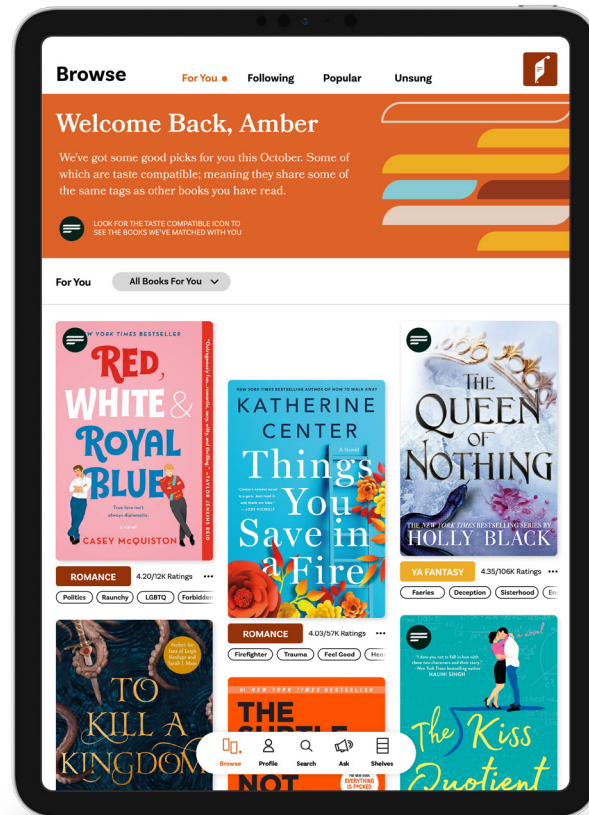
**Brand lockup** / (logotype + brandmark)

**Condensed** / (shortened logotype + brandmark)

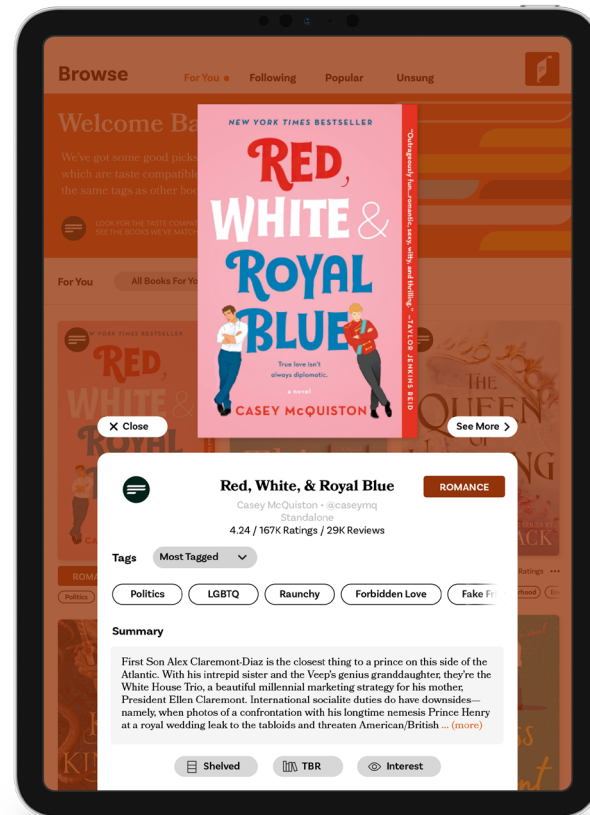
**Mark** / ( brandmark only)



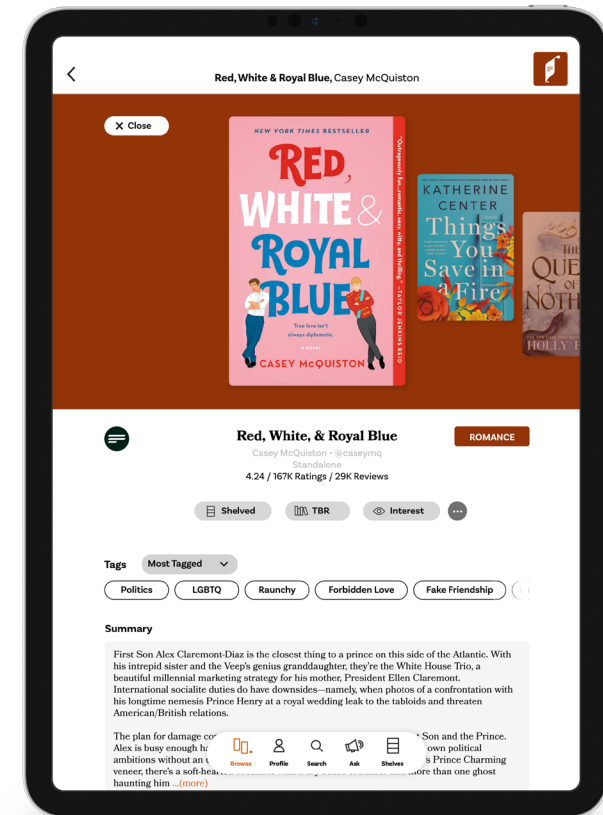
# An App



**Browse Homepage** / High level information. Gives the reader a general idea of what each book is about.

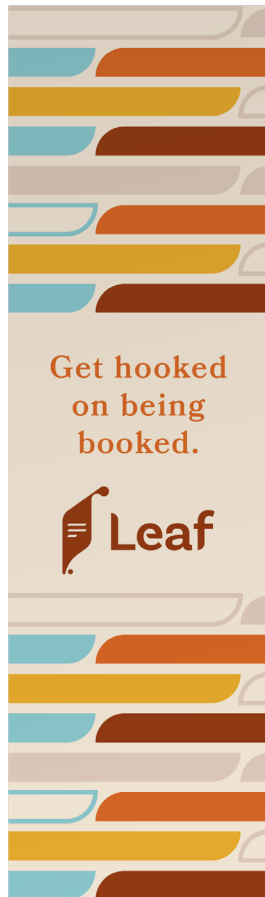


**Modal Book Preview** / More specific information given.



**Individual Book Page** / All information. Allows the reader to have the information they need in order to finalize their opinion.

# Promo Items

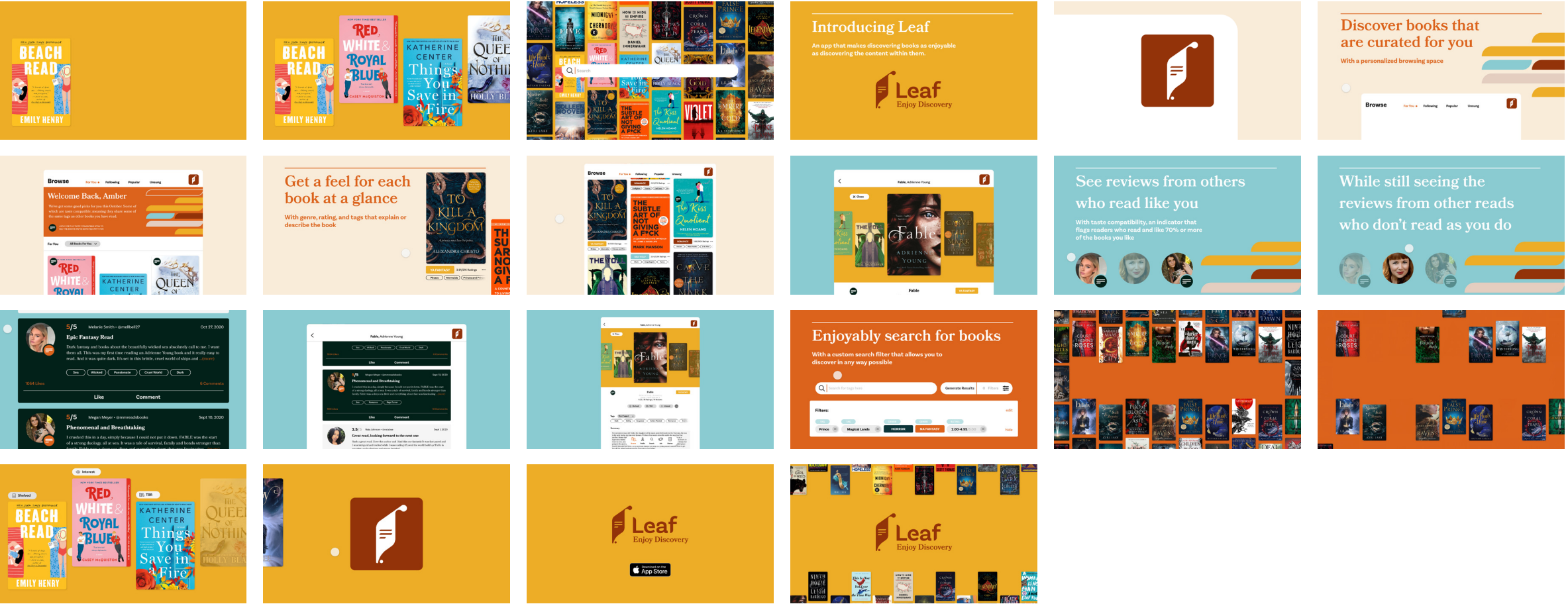


# Bookstore Posters





# Video Storyboards



# 2021

## Research Distinction Work

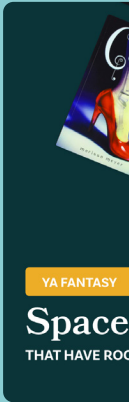
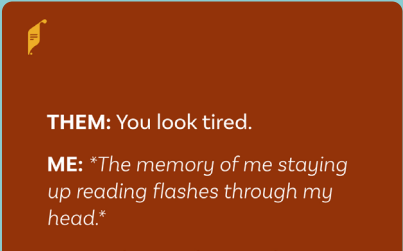
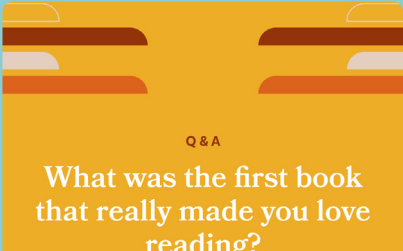
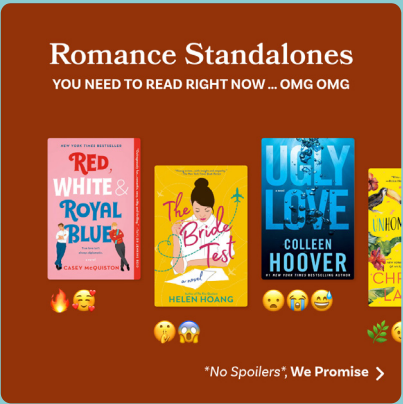
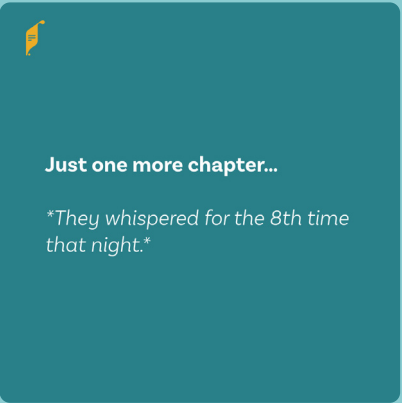
To develop a social media strategy for promoting and creating awareness for the Leaf app and brand.

Research Distinction  
Statement  
Overview  
Research  
Strategy  
Execution: Facebook,  
Instagram, Ads  
Next Steps



# Research Distinction

A focus on the strategy of promoting and creating awareness for the app via social media.



## Distinction Breakdown

My research distinction focused on researching social media promotion and strategy, then applying the research I learned by creating a social media strategy for my brand. Thereafter, I executed that strategy by designing Leaf's Facebook and Instagram.

### Research

Social Media  
Research

### Strategy

Translating Goals  
Audience Narrowing  
Competitor Analysis  
Platform Variation  
Messaging

### Execution

Goal Specific Content  
Facebook & IG

### Next Steps

Animation Ads



# Social Media Research

Maintaining a brand's social media is an iterative process that involves strategy, looking at the metrics (numbers), and refining how you post according to how successful your posts are.

## 7 KEY STEPS TO CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

1. Set Social Media Goals Based on Your Business Goals
2. Understand Your Target Audience
3. Understand Your Competitor's Angle
4. Define Your Voice (Based on Your Brand)
5. Divide and Conquer Goals Across Platforms
6. Develop Content that is Specific to Your Goals
7. Review, Refine, and Stay Committed



# Translating Goals

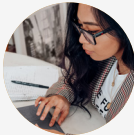
## Set Social Media Goals Based on Your Business Goals.

BRAND GOALS	MEASURABLE METRIC	SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS
01 Get more readers on <b>the leaf app</b> .	<b>Conversion &amp; Awareness</b> (Website Clicks, Account Sign-Ups, Follower Count).	01 Drive leads & gain followers. Create content regularly. Create content that introduces & hypes our app.
02 We want to be a place of <b>excitement and enjoyment</b> about books.	<b>Engagement</b> (Saves, Shares, Comments, Likes)	02 Create unique book-related content that users can save and share.
03 We want to be a place of <b>connection and conversation</b> among readers.	<b>Engagement</b> (Comments, Shares, @mentions)	03 Generate conversation on social media.
04 We want to be a <b>reliable source</b> for good book recommendations.	<b>Awareness</b> (Follower Count, Likes)	04 Create and or re-generate strong credible content from trustworthy sources and accounts.
05 We want to be a brand that <b>totally gets and understands readers</b> .	<b>Engagement</b> (Saves, Shares)	05 Create content that speaks the language of readers (messaging).

# Audience Narrowing

## Understand Your Target Audience

Social media requires that you strictly define what type of person you are targeting, and what interests them. Dig deeper into your existing audience and look at gender, income, lifestyle, age, and what they like, to better craft an account that speaks the language of that user.



### Cross Pollinator

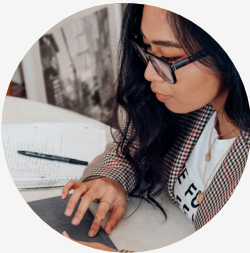
Heavy Reader • 30 Books/yr

I know what I like, but what should I read next? I'll take your suggestion into consideration and see if the book is good for me.

Quantitative

Qualitative

2020 Thesis Persona



### Cross Pollinator

Heavy Reader • 30 Books/yr

"I know what I like, but what should I read next? I'll take your suggestion into consideration and see if the book is good for me."

Quantitative

Quantitative

Age	18-40
Gender	Women Focused
Education	Undergrad+
Income	\$50K+
Area	Urban & Suburban

Personal Interests (AKA Keywords)  
TV shows. Netflix, Hulu. Game of Thrones, Bridgerton, Outlander, Harry Potter. Books. Coffee, Tea. Bookshelves. Bookstores. Libraries. Tote bags, bookmarks. Findings that perfect book that just gets you. Etsy. Pinterest. Bookstagram, Booktube, Booktok.

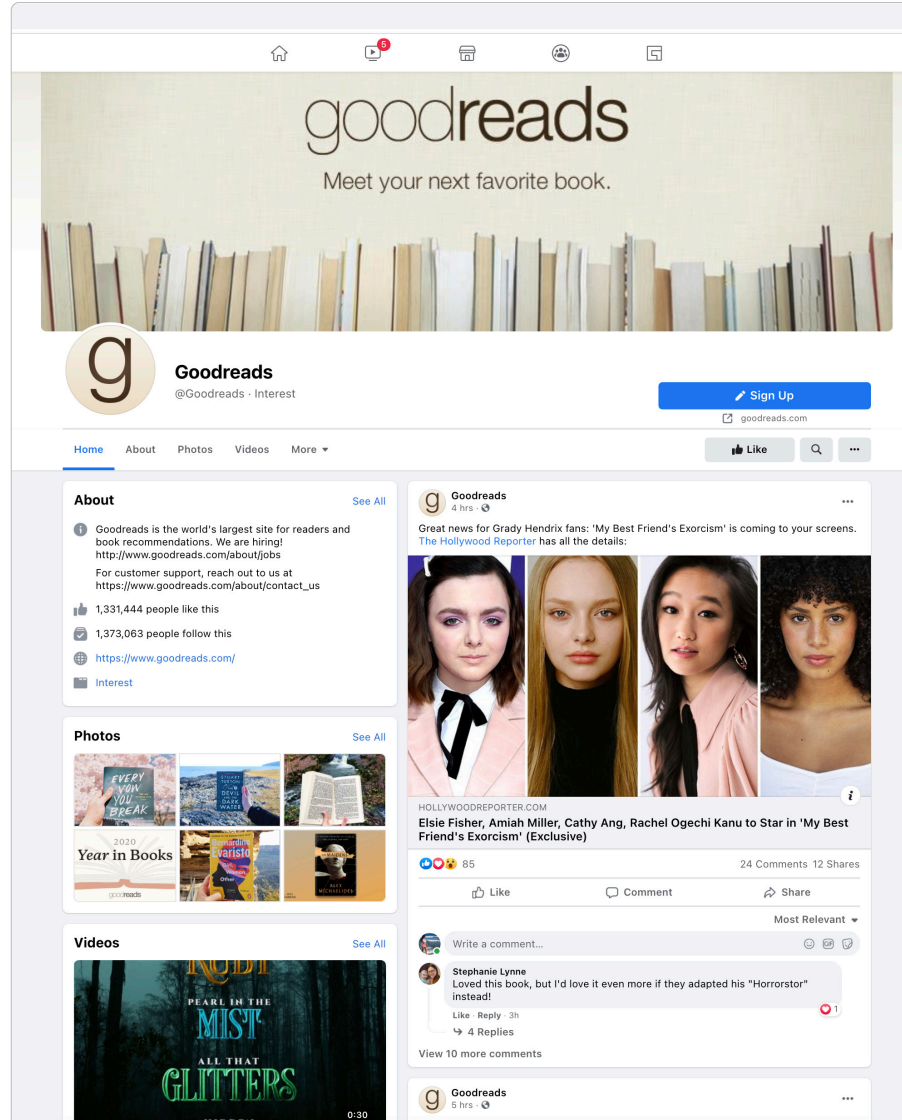
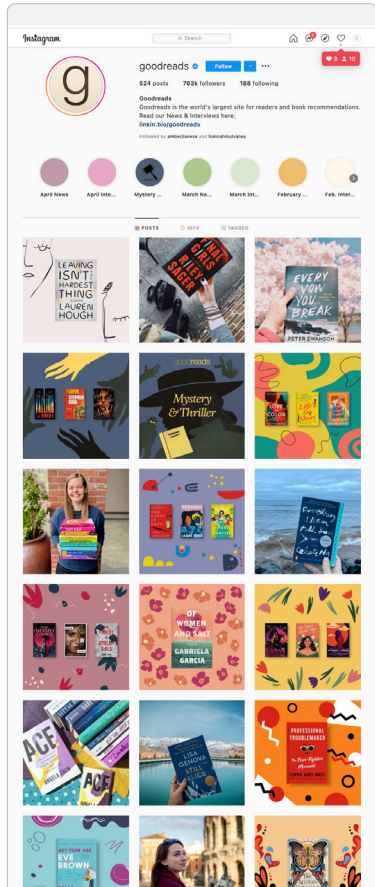
2021 Research Distinction Audience



# Competitor Analysis

## Understand Your Competitor's Angle

A competitor analysis allows you to understand what your competitors are doing on social media.



### @Goodreads

Leading app for book ratings and recommendations.

- ✓ Good variation between images and graphic posts.
- ✗ Expected design; not very engaging.

# Competitor Analysis

## Understand Your Competitor's Angle

A competitor analysis allows you to understand what your competitors are doing on social media.

### @Scribd

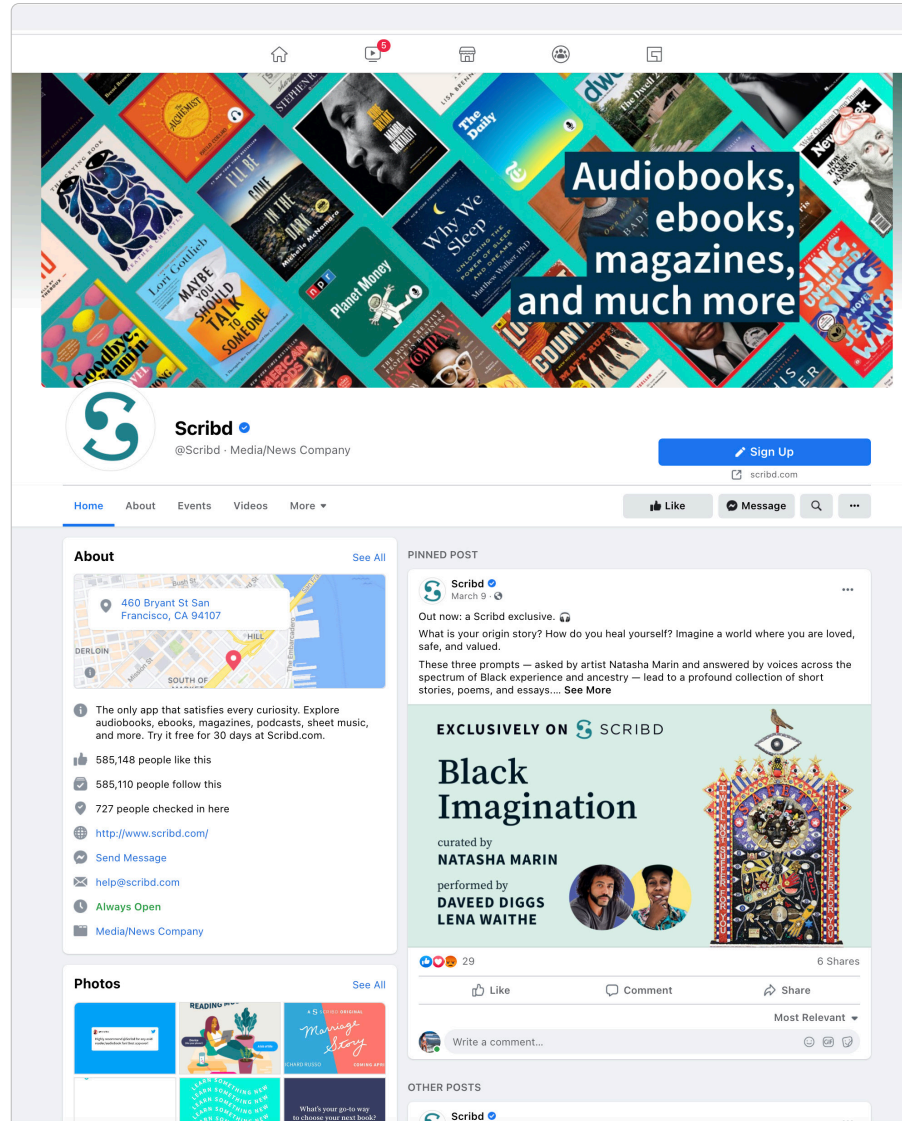
App for audiobooks, ebooks, magazines, podcasts, etc.



Unique and engaging posts.



Almost too engaging; there are no moments of visual rest - they almost always feature more than one book which can be overwhelming for users with long TBR's.





# Competitor Analysis

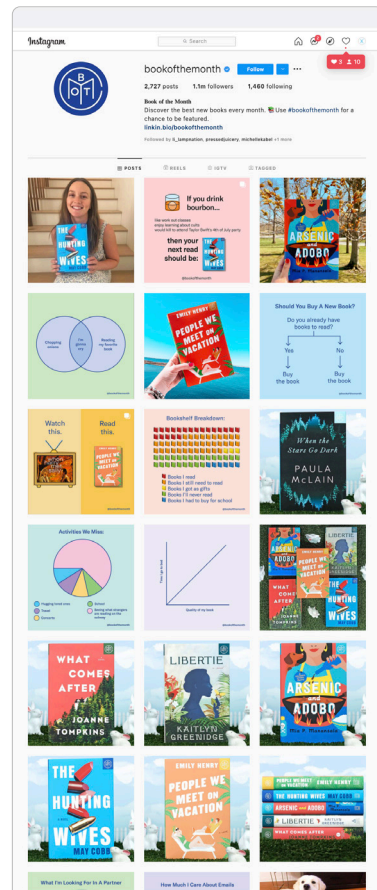
## Understand Your Competitor's Angle

A competitor analysis allows you to understand what your competitors are doing on social media.

### @Book of The Month

New book subscriptions every month.

- ✓ Funny and relatable posts that get lots of likes and saves.
- ✗ Repetitive posts across platforms makes it feel like they don't care to create variation.



# Competitor Analysis Takeaways

## Understand Your Competitor's Angle

A competitor analysis allows you to understand what your competitors are doing on social media.

- ✓ Speaks to readers as if the account is a fellow reader.
- ✓ Engaging and fun posts, with some moments where a single post is focused on one book.
- ✗ Speaks to readers like a gossip magazine or blog.
- ✗ Not too many posts that focus on more than one book - this can cause TBR anxiety and disinterest.

# Messaging

## Define Your Voice (Based on Your Brand)

Without a strong voice, brands can fall into a trap of sounding different across different posts if multiple designers and copywriters are working on the content simultaneously.

HELPFUL

FRIENDLY

HONEST

POSITIVE

RELATABLE

## BRAND LANGUAGE

We speak to you like a good friend giving advice.

## BRAND MESSAGE

We understand you, and we want you to express and embrace yourself as a reader.

## BRAND PROMISE

We will create an enjoyable book searching experience for you, in order for you to find your next enjoyable read.

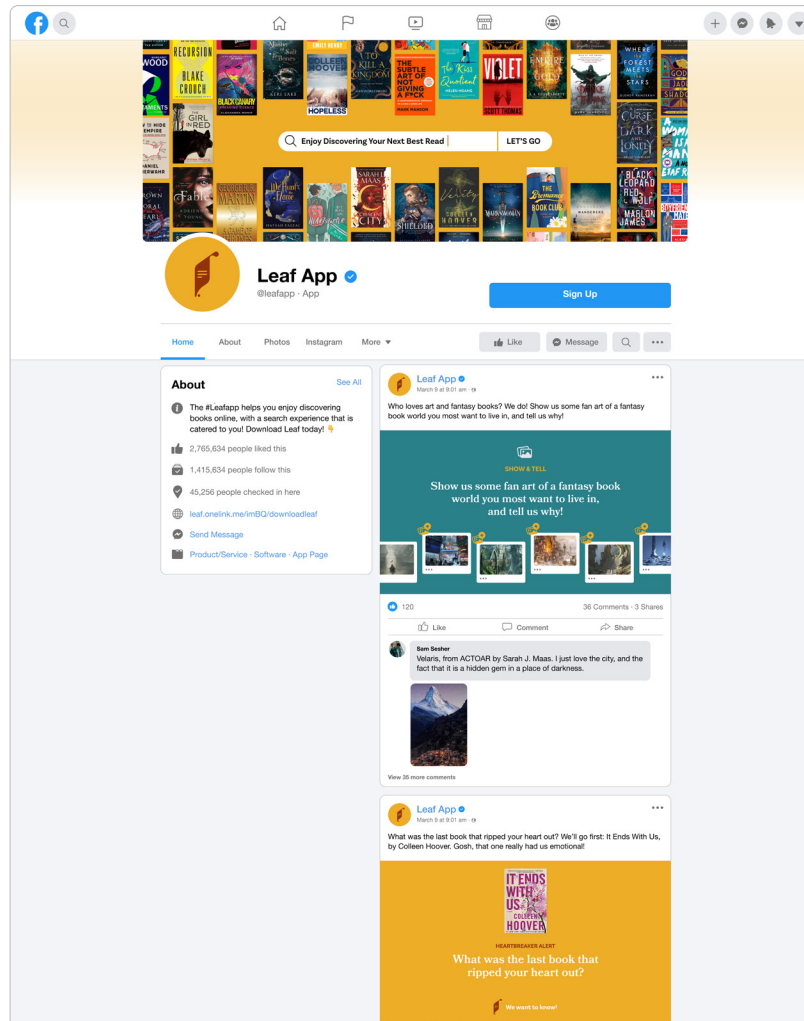




## Instagram



## Facebook



# Platform Strategy & Variation

## Divide and Conquer Goals Across Platforms

Write out a mission statement for each network. This is a one-sentence declaration to keep you focused on a specific goal relating to your social media goals.

### INSTAGRAM

Drive Leads

Gain Followers

Engagement

We will use Instagram to grow our brand's audience, generate leads, and boost community engagement.

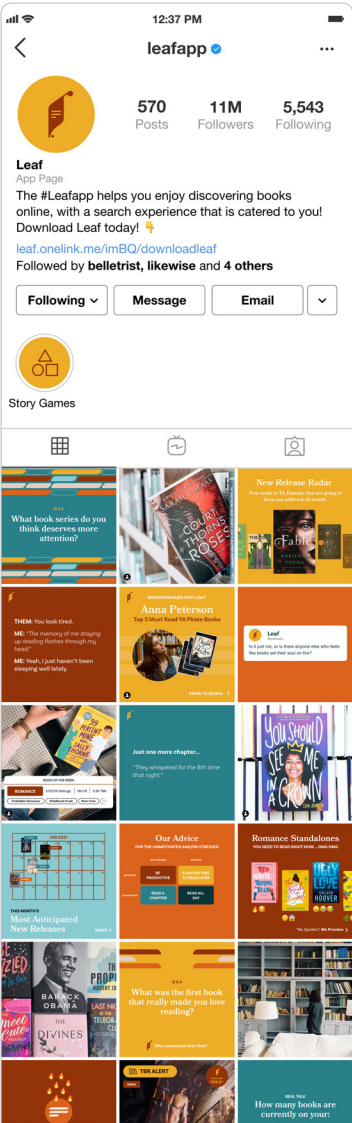
### FACEBOOK

Engagement

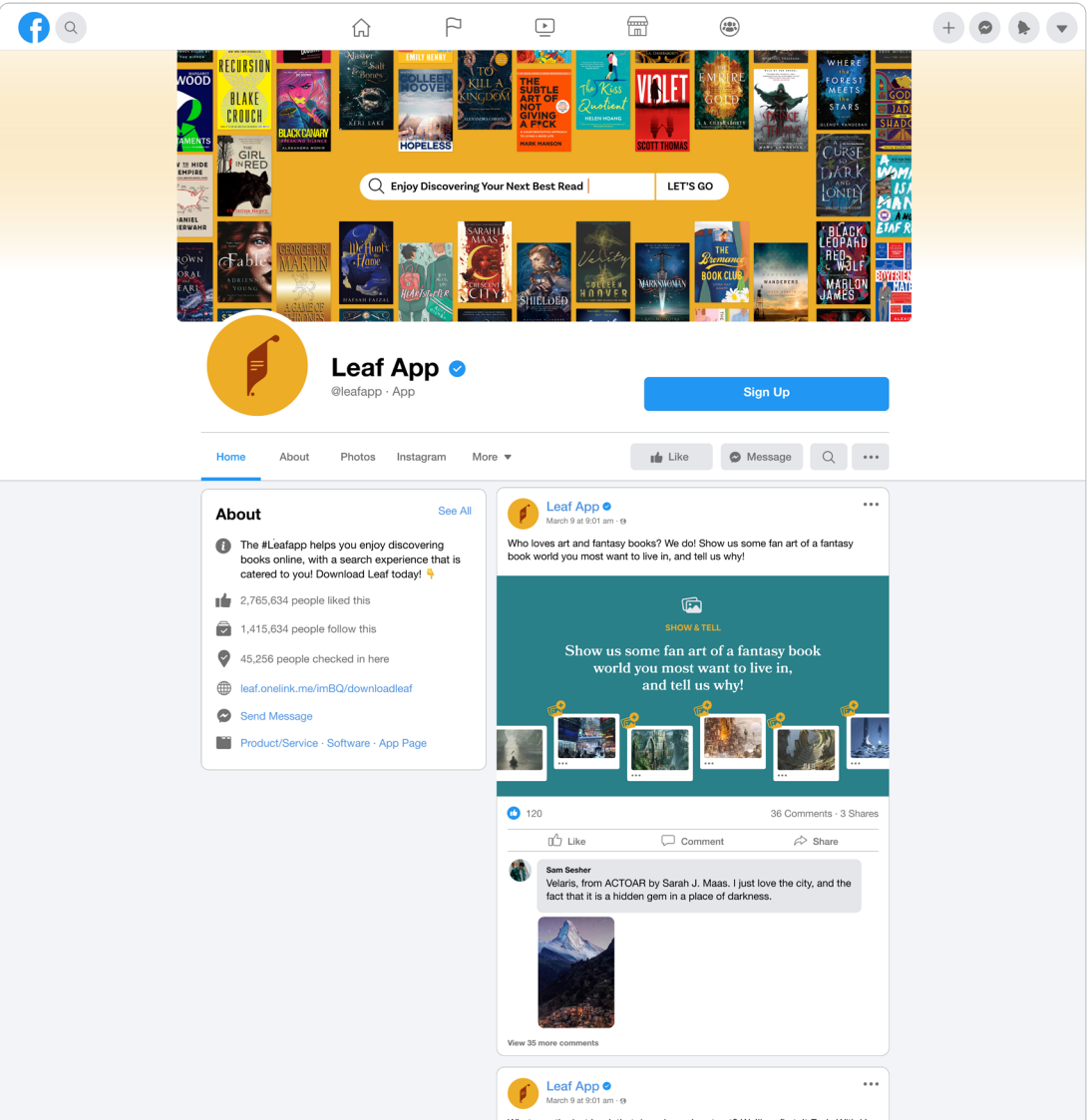
We will use Facebook to become a place for readers to go to connect about all things books.

# Execution

Instagram



Facebook





# Execution

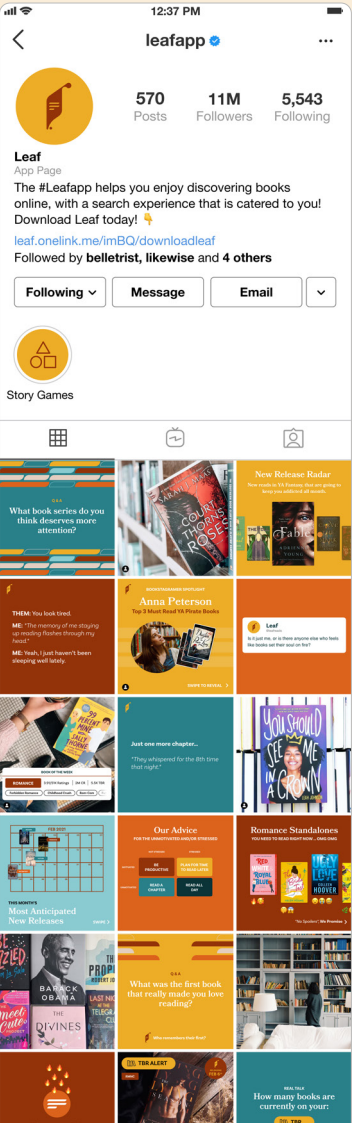
## INSTAGRAM

Drive Leads

Gain Followers

Engagement

We will use Instagram to grow our brand’s audience, generate leads, and boost community engagement.




# Execution

FACEBOOK

Engagement






We will use Facebook to become a place for readers to go to connect about all things books.



Leaf App  
March 9 at 9:01 am · 🌐

Romance Standalones that are on our list of MUST READ RIGHT NOW.

Romance Standalones  
YOU NEED TO READ RIGHT NOW ...OMG OMG



Funny

Cute

Sassy

Emotional

Risky

120

10 Comments · 3 Shares

Like

Comment

Share

Megan Sitter  
JennaFram

Have you read all of these?


Like · Reply · ⋮

Gen Brown

Adding these to my TBR now! The pile is endless.

Like · Reply · ⋮

View 8 more comments



Leaf App  
March 9 at 9:01 am · 🌐

What was the last book that ripped your heart out? We'll go first: It Ends With Us, by Colleen Hoover. Gosh, that one really had us emotional!

IT ENDS WITH US  
COLLEEN HOOVER

HEARTBREAKER ALERT

What was the last book that ripped your heart out?

We want to know!

120

56 Comments · 3 Shares

Like

Comment







Share

Mia Elter








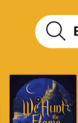
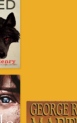











All The Bright Places by Jennifer Niven


Like · Reply · ⋮

View 55 more comments



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About

See All

The #Leafapp helps you enjoy discovering books online, with a search experience that is catered to you! Download Leaf today! 📖

2,765,634 people liked this

1,415,634 people follow this

45,256 people checked in here

leaf.onelink.me/imBQ/downloadleaf

Send Message

Product/Service · Software · App Page







Leaf App

March 9 at 9:01 am · 🌐

Who loves art and fantasy books? We do! Show us some fan art of a fantasy book world you most want to live in, and tell us why!

SHOW & TELL

Show us some fan art of a fantasy book world you most want to live in, and tell us why!



120

36 Comments · 3 Shares

Like

Comment

Share

Sam Seshier

Velaris, from ACTOAR by Sarah J. Maas. I just love the city, and the fact that it is a hidden gem in a place of darkness.

Like · Reply · ⋮

# Translating Goals Into Posts

## Taking the Goals You Created and Designing Posts that Achieve Them.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS



**01** Drive leads & gain followers. Create content regularly. Create content that introduces & hypes our app.



**02** Create unique book-related content that users can save and share.



### 03 Generate conversation on social media.



**04** Create and or re-generate strong credible content from trustworthy sources and accounts.



**05** Create content that speaks the language of readers (messaging).

## POST TYPE

## Introductory Motion Ads

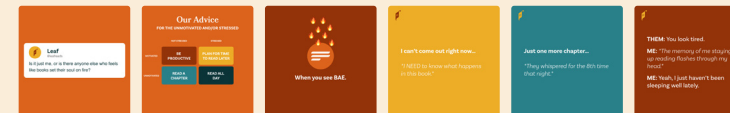
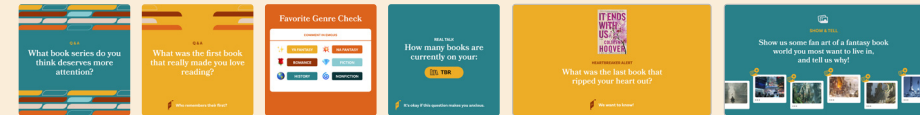
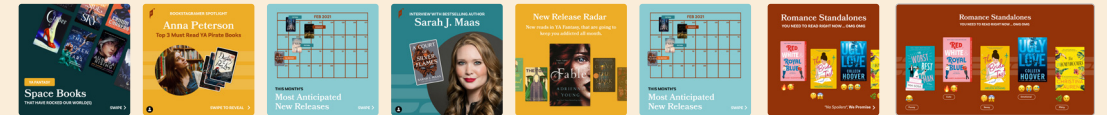
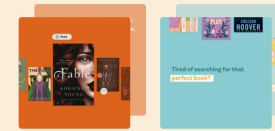
## Multi Rec Posts, Author & Reader Features

## Engagement Posts

## User Generated Content

## Relatable Sharables

## POST VISUAL



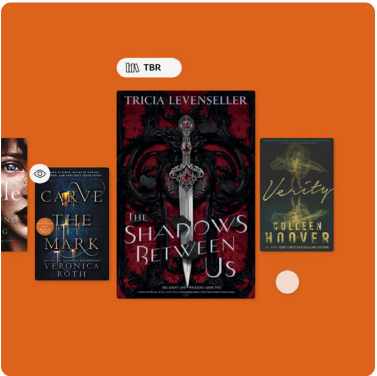
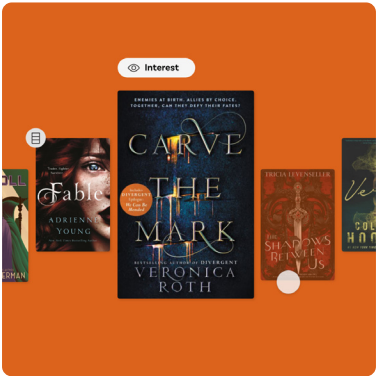
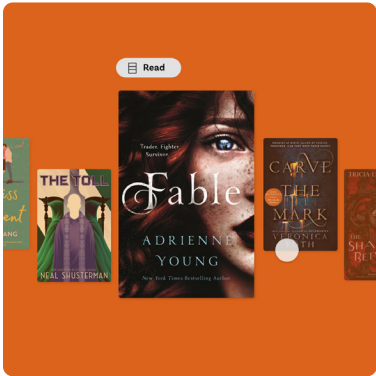
# Introductory Motion Ads

Ads that appear to a targeted potential user/follower that introduce and explain the perks of the Leaf app.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL


- 01
- Drive leads & gain followers. Create content regularly. Create content that introduces & hypes our app.

### INSTAGRAM



Keep all of your books together,  
in an app that is curated for you.

WITH THE #1 BOOK FINDING APP.



Free to use. Available in the App Store.



# Introductory Motion Ads

Ads that appear to a targeted potentail user/follower that introduce and explain the perks of the Leaf app.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 01 Drive leads & gain followers. Create content regularly. Create content that introduces & hypes our app.

### INSTAGRAM



Tired of searching for that perfect book?



Find books that are compatible To your tastes

BASED ON OTHER BOOKS YOU'VE LOVED.



Find books that are compatible To your tastes

BASED ON OTHER BOOKS YOU'VE LOVED.



Find books that are compatible To your tastes

BASED ON OTHER BOOKS YOU'VE LOVED.

DOWNLOAD LEAF TODAY!

And find that perfect book.

WITH THE #1 BOOK FINDING APP.



Free to use. Available in the App Store.

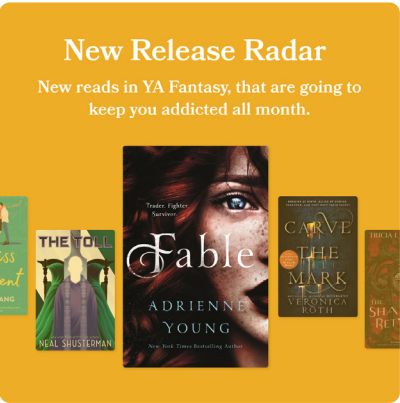
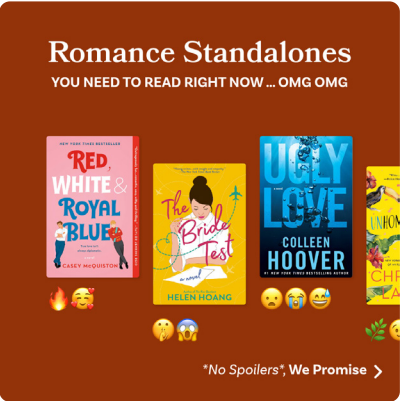
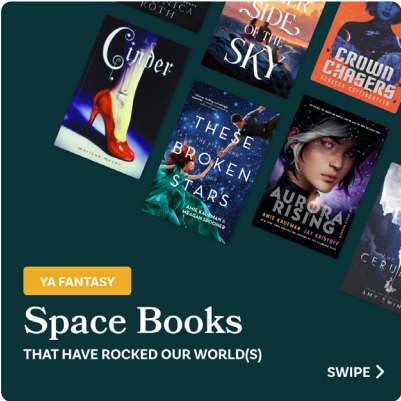
# Multi-Rec Posts

Posts that recommend multiple books in unique ways.

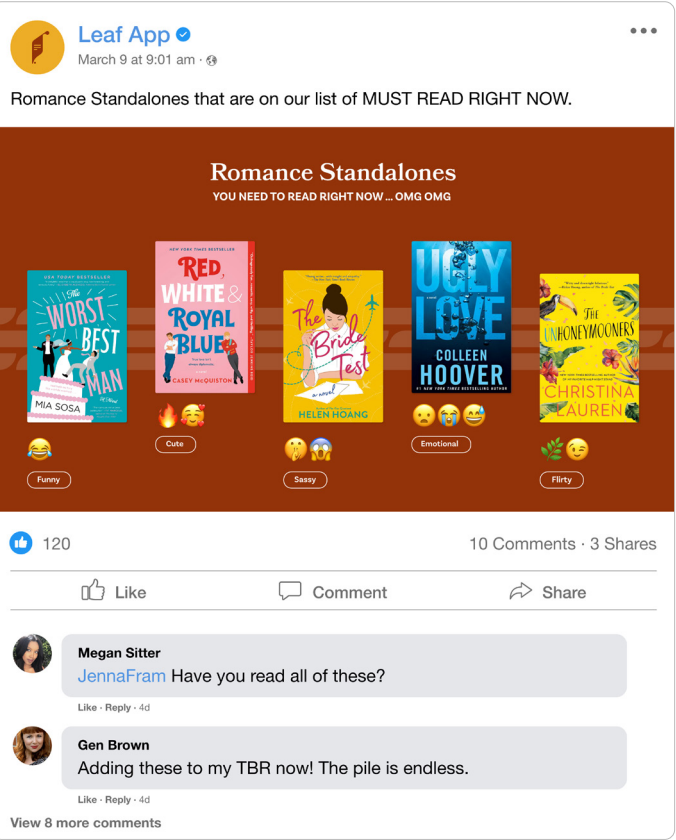
## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 02
- Create unique book-related content that users can save and share.

### INSTAGRAM



### FACEBOOK



# Author & Reader Features

Posts that feature authors and readers in an interesting way.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 02** Create unique book-related content that users can save and share.

### INSTAGRAM



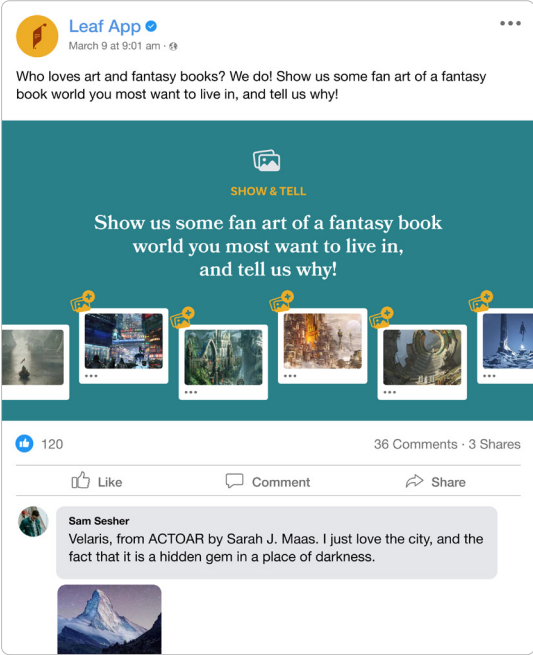
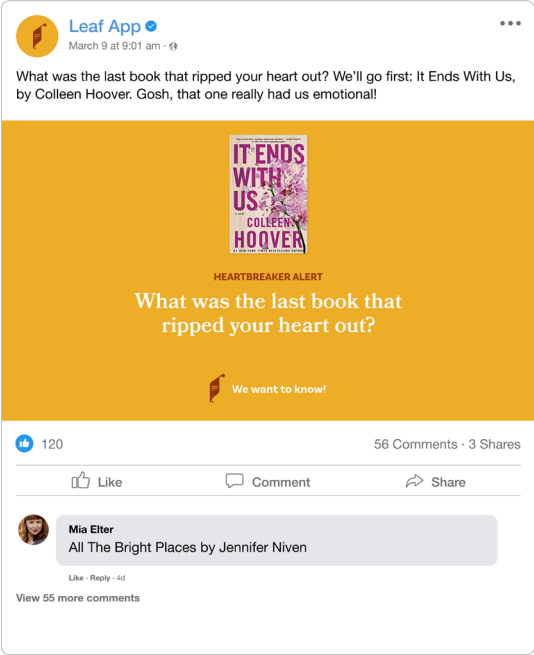
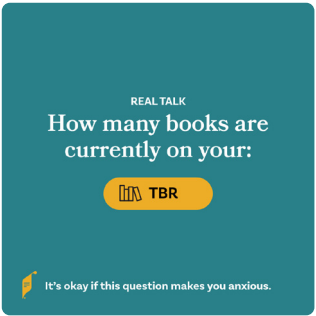


# Engagement Posts

Posts that ask a user to do something or engage in some way. Comment, share, save, or react.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 03
- Generate conversation on social media.



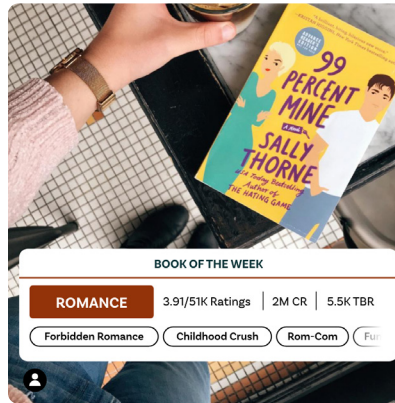
# User Generated Content

Posts that Leaf gets permission to re-post from popular followers, with a book of the week twist.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 04** Create and or re-generate strong credible content from trustworthy sources and accounts.

### INSTAGRAM



@bookbaristas  
@booksandlala



## Relatable Shareables

Posts that are funny and shareable because of how much the viewer relates to them. (That's so me effect).

### SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL

- 05** Create content that speaks the language of readers (messaging).

#### INSTAGRAM



**THEM:** You look tired.

**ME:** *\*The memory of me staying up reading flashes through my head.\**

**ME:** Yeah, I just haven't been sleeping well lately.



**Just one more chapter...**

*\*They whispered for the 8th time that night.\**



**I can't come out right now...**

*\*I NEED to know what happens in this book.\**



**Leaf**  
@leafreads

Is it just me, or is there anyone else who feels like books set their soul on fire?

#### Our Advice

FOR THE UNMOTIVATED AND/OR STRESSED

	NOT STRESSED	STRESSED
MOTIVATED	BE PRODUCTIVE	PLAN FOR TIME TO READ LATER
UNMOTIVATED	READ A CHAPTER	READ ALL DAY

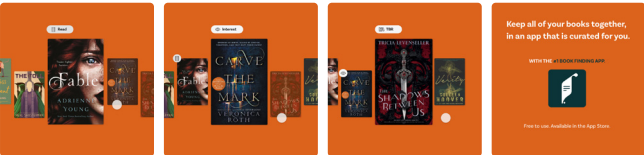


**When you see BAE.**

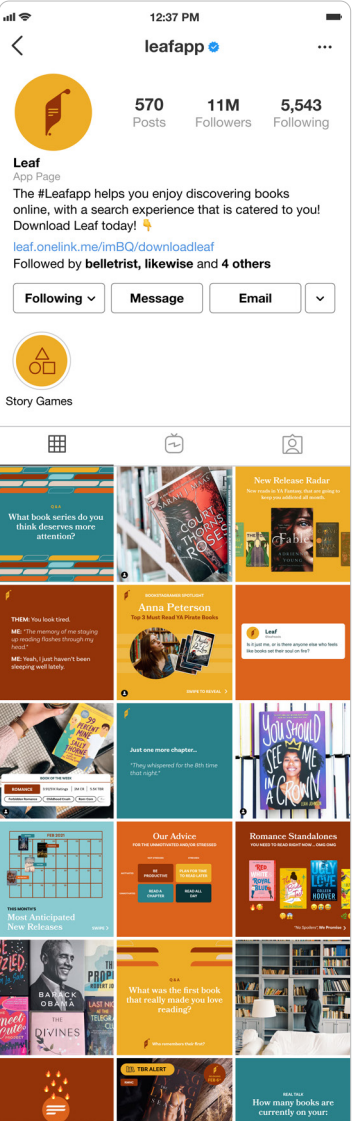
# Next Steps

If the project were to continue on:

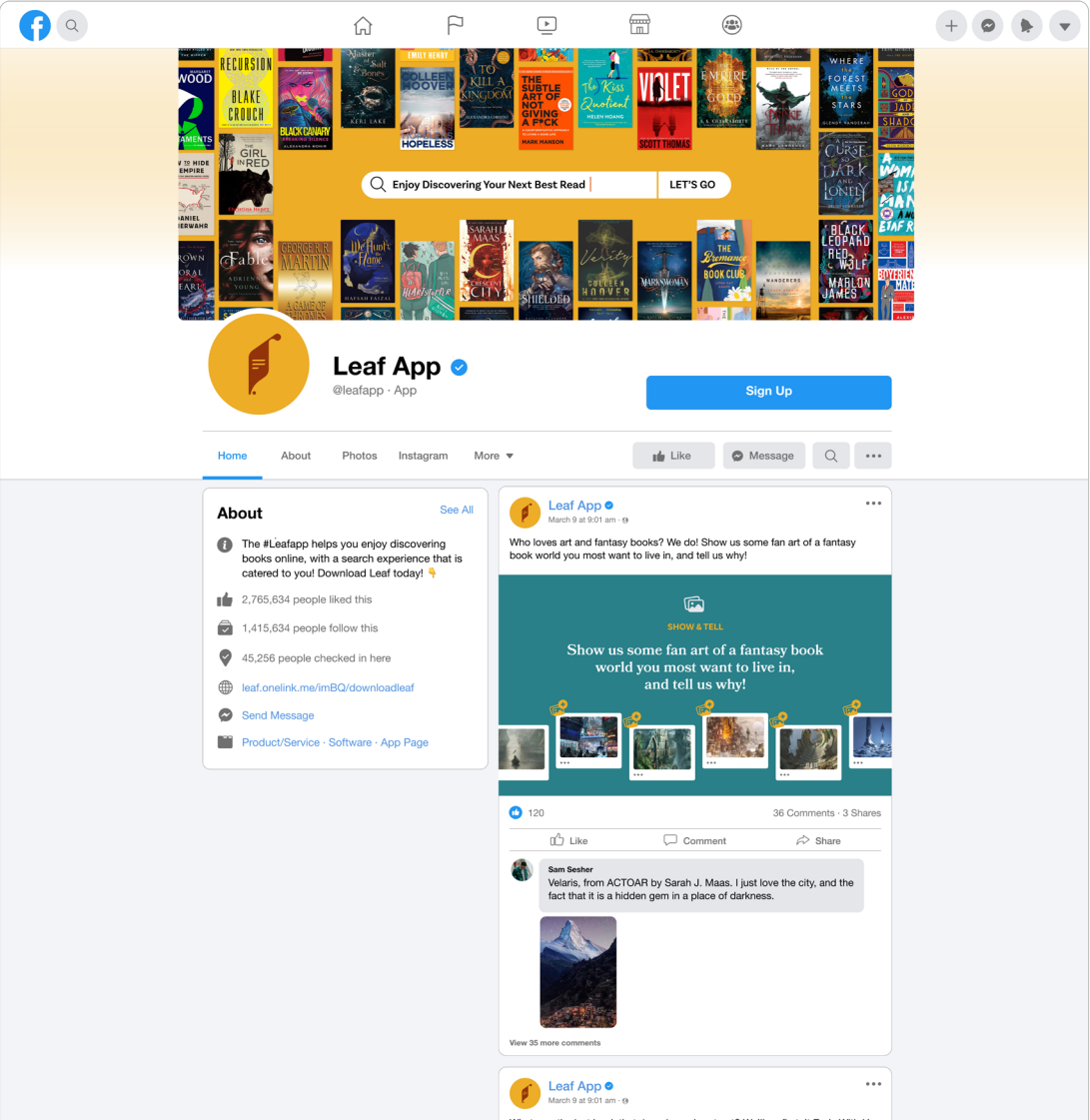
- 1. Build out the introductory animation ads.
- 2. Create more Facebook content.
- 3. Create a strategy for how often we post.
- 4. Consider how to use FB and IG stories.
- 7. Post and refine based on metrics.



Instagram



Facebook





# Sources

## **Sprout Social, Building your SM strategy for 2021.**

<<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-marketing-strategy/>>

**Sprout Social, The most Important Social Media Trends to Know for 2020.** <<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-trends/>>

**Hootsuite, How to Create a Social Media Strategy in 8 Easy Steps.** <<https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-create-a-social-media-marketing-plan/>>

**LinkedIn, Facebook vs. Instagram: How and Why Content Approach Must Be Different.** <<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/facebook-vs-instagram-how-why-content-approach-must-different-franks/>>

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## **Book Image Sources**

All book images were sourced from either Goodreads, amazon.com, and Google Books.

## **Instagram Image Posts**

The full bleed images of books were taken from the following Instagram accounts: @bookbaristas @booksandlala

“The problem with books is that  
they end.”

Caroline Kepnes, You

